

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

25X1A

COUNTRY Korea
SUBJECT North Korean Mines

REPORT NO.

DATE DISTR. 27 March 1953

NO. OF PAGES 2 25X1A

REQUIREMENT NO. REFERENCES

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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Gold Mine at Yongmi-san, Kaun-dong

1. In mid-September 1952, the Kaun gold and silver mine at Yongmi-san, Kaun-dong (N 39-11, E 127-11) (CU-4338) was reactivated after having been shut down in August 1945. Chinese Communist army technicians suggested the reopening of the mine after making an appraisal.
2. In October 1952 the mine was producing gold and silver ore. There were 430 laborers, 80 of them women. These laborers were paid a daily wage of 180 won and received free meals. The mine was managed by CHONG Pyong-ch'il (6774/3521/0003) and a Chinese technician named KUO (6753) (fnu) who acted as an adviser.

Ch'olsan Mine

3. On 10 October 1952 there was a mine operating at Ch'olsan (N 39-46, E 124-40) (XE-4303) which employed 10,000 laborers.¹ This mine was formerly operated by the Japanese government. After August 1945, the North Korean government drafted civilian laborers for the mine under the Labor Mobilization Law. The ore produced was sent to the USSR. Operations at the mine ceased while the United Nations forces occupied the area, but began again in January 1951 when Soviet rock drills were introduced there. In October 1952 the mine was being managed by Soviet technicians. The ore produced was packed in 40 by 40 by 60-centimeter wooden boxes and transported to Ch'aryon'guan (N 39-51, E 124-43) (XE-4712) in trucks belonging to the mine. There were approximately 30 Soviet ZIS trucks there. During the winter, the underground water in this mine freezes and causes a work stoppage.

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4. Of the 10,000 laborers employed at the Ch'olsan mine, 4,000 were prisoners and 6,000 were civilian laborers. Most of the prisoners were political offenders who had been convicted in court of either cooperating with the United Nations forces during their occupation of the area, or not cooperating with the Communist regime. Among the 6,000 civilian laborers were people who had transferred to Ch'olsan from other places by choice, refugees from the front-line areas, and individuals who had been taken to work in the mine by force as punishment for non-cooperation with the Communist regime. This latter group had not been tried by a court. Treatment of the laborers was conducted according to classification. The classes were as follows: first class, free laborers and refugees; second class, forced laborers; third class, prisoners. The treatment received by the workers was supervised by the Soviets and was better than the treatment of personnel at any other mine.

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